

Charlie Parker, Ben Webster, Benny Carter, Johnny Hodges, Flip Phillips - Super Session (2002)

Written by bluesever

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Charlie Parker, Ben Webster, Benny Carter, Johnny Hodges, Flip Phillips - Super Session (2002)



1 Funky Blues 13:26 2 What Is This Thing Called Love 15:50 3 Ballad Medley: A. All the Things You Are, B. Dearly Beloved, C. The Nearness of You, D. I'll Get By 17:23 4 Jam Blues 14:41
Benny Carter, Charlie Parker, Johnny Hodges – alto saxophone Ben Webster, Flip Phillips – tenor saxophone Charlie Shavers - trumpet Barney Kessel – guitar Oscar Peterson – piano Ray Brown – bass J.C. Heard – drums

This album comes as a pleasant surprise on several levels. I thought my collection of Charlie Parker recordings was as complete as it needed to be--most of the Dial and Savoy masters and alternate takes, lots of air shots, the fabled solos on "Embraceable You" and "Night in Tunisia," and of course the historic Massey Hall concert, later billed as the "World's Greatest Jazz Concert." But as impressive as all those recordings are, they distance the listener in ways that may fuel the cult aura surrounding Bird and contribute to his legendary status but hardly atone for my inability to see and hear him performing live. The truncated solos of the 78 rpm recordings, the very "lo fi" audio, the predictable bebop repertory all served to provoke and tantalize as much as satisfy curiosity about his genius.

"Jam Session" is the only album I've heard that presents Charlie Parker in familiar company with room to stretch out and with microphones capable of capturing the moment with the verisimilitude expected by today's listeners. Supported by Oscar Peterson and Ray Brown and sharing solo space with 4 progenitors of the saxophone, all of whom would ironically outlive him, Bird sounds both relaxed and in control, a musician who doesn't need to prove anything to anybody, but just playing for the fun of it. It's a rare, humanizing glimpse of a legend who proves no less mortal than his bandmates. --- Giuseppe C., amazon.com

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